



STATE OF MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE JOB PROFILE

Working Title

Communications Officer

Job Code Title

Public Relations Specialist

Pay Band

07

Job Code Number

273317

Director's Office

Executive Office

Public Relations Unit

Fair Labor Standards Act

Non-Exempt

The Montana Department of Revenue administers more than 30 state taxes and fees; establishes values for taxable property, including agricultural land, residential real estate, commercial real estate, forest land, business equipment, railroads and public utilities; supervises the operation of the state liquor stores and agencies and administers the laws governing the sale, taxation, and licensing of alcoholic beverages; and returns unclaimed property to its rightful owners.

The Director's Office supports the agency's Director and is composed of four work units: Legal Services Office; Office of Tax Policy and Research; Office of Human Resources and Organizational Development; and the Executive Office. The Executive Office includes the administrative support staff, fiscal administrator, public relations, and taxpayer assistance and public outreach.

Job Responsibilities

The Communications Officer plans, develops, implements, analyzes, and oversees the department's public relations, media relations, and general communication efforts. The incumbent coordinates public relations and media relations projects to provide accurate, pertinent, timely, accessible, and consistent information to various audiences. The work includes developing and implementing communications strategies, plans, policies, and activities; directing the department's response to major issues of public interest and information inquiries; and coordinating media relations. This position reports to the deputy director and supervises the public relations staff.

• Public Relations and Media Relations 40%**Public Relations**

1. Advises director, deputy director, division administrators, and managers on communication strategies including complex, sensitive, and contentious issues involving state and federal agency officials, legislators, media representatives, business and community interests, and the general public. Researches and evaluates specific communication problems and develops appropriate recommendations.
2. Develops guidelines and procedures for delivering public presentations, mediating sensitive or contentious communications, and other issues. Provides constructive assessment, training, and recommendations for effective communication and representation by top management and front-line employees.
3. Develops and implements crisis communication plans to promote timely, consistent, and definitive responses. Responds to immediate, critical, or controversial events and issues of high public interest or controversy. Provides expert advice to the director and management team on the best approach to take. Creates responses in critical situations based on the director's and department's position.

4. Directs department responses to inquiries and provides accurate, timely, and effective representation of department positions and communication objectives. Researches and develops model responses to issues on behalf of the Governor, director, deputy director, division administrators, and managers to provide accurate and concise information to legislators, agencies, businesses, organizations and the public. Coordinates director's and deputy director's responses to information requests as requested. Researches, drafts, and proofs contacts and responses to local, state, and federal officials; business and community organizations; media representatives; and others. Presents information on behalf of the director or deputy director as requested.
5. Plans and prepares public presentations and speaking engagements for director, deputy director, division administrators, managers, and key business experts to provide accurate information and to foster support and cooperation on behalf of the department. Oversees the development of presentation tools and materials and the writing of speeches, talking points, and model responses for speakers with the goal of promoting clear and consistent communication of department positions on various issues. Coordinates and maintains department speakers' roster for specific issues.
6. Prepares testimony and other information for presentation to legislative committees, boards, or other public councils as assigned by the director or deputy director. Researches pertinent issues; anticipates concerns and objections; coordinates with subject matter experts; reviews departmental history and statistics; etc. Prepares factual, compelling presentations to support the needs and interests of the department.
7. Oversees the design, content, and functionality of the department's website and publications.

Media Relations

1. Serves as point of contact with the media to provide accurate, timely, and effective representation of department positions and communication objectives. Serves as primary contact for media relations activities including gathering information for media representatives. Handles interview requests and arranges media interviews with director, deputy director, division administrators, managers, or business specialists.
2. Plans and prepares news conferences and special media events to foster public awareness and support for department programs, happenings, and issues. Arranges all aspects of events such as developing media materials, drafting speaking points, requesting media presence, and coordinating logistics.
3. Builds relationships with media representatives by identifying their submission deadlines, publication requirements, issues and trends, reporting styles, etc. Contacts appropriate media representatives for issues relating to their specific publication.
4. Develops department responses, news releases, and position statements regarding pertinent issues or events. Ensures that public statements are accurate.
5. Develops guidelines and procedures for responding to media requests and providing media interviews. Creates model responses to anticipated media questions.

• **Communications Planning and Policy Development 30%**

1. Develops communications plans, programs, policies, and procedures according to department objectives, public information needs, available media venues, target audiences, and effective communication channels. Assesses department goals and objectives. Identifies and researches issues affecting the department. Reviews the department's policies with an understanding of statutory responsibilities and limitations. Evaluates intended audiences.
2. Analyzes and evaluates the effectiveness of department communications to assess overall effectiveness and identify opportunities for improvement.
3. Develops communication programs to foster positive public perceptions of the department and its work; promote public interest and involvement; and maintain open and accessible communication channels between the department, its stakeholders, and the general public.
4. Informs director, deputy director, division administrators, managers, and key business experts of both solicited and unsolicited media coverage. Monitors and evaluates media coverage to identify opportunities for improvement. Tracks placement of news releases, public service

announcements, and promotional spots. Evaluates the quality of coverage (scope, favorability, venue, etc.). Compiles reference samples. Creates media coverage reports as requested.

5. Serves as part of the department's leadership and management teams. Attends meetings to exchange critical information and develop plans for dealing with communication issues.
6. Keeps department staff informed and updated on current issues that may affect their particular area of work. Uses communication channels such as the intranet, department e-newsletter, staff meetings, and email.

- **Staff Leadership, Management, and Supervision 25%**

The incumbent is responsible for leading staff and delegating the management of division programs to subordinate managers appropriately. The division administrator monitors the progress of work plans, goals, and objectives of the division; ensures they are in line with the department's goals and priorities; and makes adjustments as needed. Supervision and development of staff is imperative to a manager's success.

Staff Leadership

1. Creates and maintains a high performance environment characterized by enthusiastic and positive leadership, direction, and a strong team orientation. Motivates employees to accomplish numerous division goals and objectives. Coordinates performance measures with staff. Encourages the development of new techniques or solutions to problems and assists with the resolution.
2. Provides leadership and mentoring opportunities to direct and coordinate the activities of staff through subordinate managers to ensure efficient operations and increase productivity including implementing and monitoring corrective action plans to solve problems.
3. Readily adapts to changes in existing operations, programs, services, activities, and functions. Makes recommendations. Takes necessary action to implement or accommodate changes. Maintains a positive attitude in communication to staff even when difficult changes arise.
4. Maintains an atmosphere of safety within the division. Ensures adequate training for all staff in proper lifting techniques, sensible ergonomic practices, and work-specific safety opportunities.
5. Makes and accepts responsibility for decisions necessary to carry out the unit's mission.
6. Accepts direction and feedback from supervisors and follows through appropriately.
7. Provides appropriate direction and feedback to subordinate supervisors. Ensures that delegated responsibilities are carried out and delegated authority is used appropriately.

Management

1. Conducts strategic planning in coordination with the director to develop and establish short and long-range plans. Participates in development of viable goals and objectives consistent with agency priorities.
2. Develops programs, policies, and procedures to assure the citizens of Montana that the department operates in accordance with the highest standard of integrity and ethics.
3. Evaluates state and national standards; new trends and technologies; division needs; and other factors to integrate requirements and resources into program plans.
4. Establishes and approves overall responsibilities, organizational structures, work activities, work plans, deadlines, and priorities. Evaluates workflow processes, efficiencies, and problems to identify the most effective use of staff and material resources to meet goals and objectives. Appropriately allocates resources to accomplish assigned work by coordinating with other work units and programs and adjusting subordinate assignments as needed. Considers pertinent factors such as available resources, staff ability, timelines, and work load. Identifies the need for additional staff or resources while maintaining fiscal responsibility.
5. Plans, schedules, and assigns special projects. Initiates adjustments to reflect changes in overall division and agency goals, operations, and relationships to departmental divisions.

6. Monitors compliance with established operational policies and procedures and achievement of division and department goals through consultation and regular meetings with subordinate supervisors; personal review of program and project management activities; and through discussions with other department staff and management. Disseminates data and promotes information exchange for support and advancement of department mission and goals. Uses input from the staff to guide program responsibilities.
7. Recommends program budgets for staff and equipment. Reviews allocations, project plans and objectives, and expenditures.
8. Identifies information needs and develops reports, information systems, spreadsheets, and other tracking methods to monitor program status, work progress, division performance, and individual performance. Uses data to identify areas of concern, strengths, and weaknesses. Provides analysis and recommends solutions to department management to resolve problems. Oversees quality control of information and sources.
9. Prepares correspondence in response to requests or inquiries. Ensures that necessary reports, correspondence, documentation, administrative actions, files, and records are correctly prepared, completed, maintained, and processed in accordance with applicable guidelines and time frames. Ensures the all areas of the division follow department expectations regarding disclosure and employee confidentiality.

Supervision

1. Recruits and hires employees. Interviews applicants and makes appropriate selection recommendations according to applicable laws, rules, policies, procedures, and guidelines. Ensures proper training and orientation of new employees.
2. Establishes criteria for acceptable work behavior and performance. Promotes workplace efficiency and productivity by educating, mentoring, coaching, and correcting employee behavior. Encourages exceptional performance and improvement in areas of individual weakness. Develops and monitors corrective actions.
3. Appropriately reviews, recommends, and initiates personnel actions according to applicable policies, procedures, and guidelines. Carefully considers options available. Works with Human Resources to take appropriate disciplinary action as needed. Enforces disciplinary policies.
4. Recognizes and promptly resolves internal and external issues. Mediates personnel issues in a very timely manner.
5. Completes employee performance reviews. Defines goals and required results at the beginning of the performance review period. Communicates on a very regular basis with staff on progress toward those goals and results.
6. Determines the training needs of staff through analysis of program effectiveness, new technology and policies, and staff performance. Ensures consistency in the application of training opportunities for all staff. Develops and enhances on-the-job training opportunities to ensure staff is provided the needed training to fulfill their job duties including cross-training opportunities. Provides necessary information and tools to staff to complete any new tasks and duties
7. Communicates policy and procedures clearly and effectively in order to obtain desired results. Ensures staff adhere to rules, policies, procedures, and collective bargaining agreements.
8. Monitors and approves staff leave usage while ensuring adequate coverage is maintained.
9. Upholds and promotes the department's conviction to customer service throughout agency contacts as well as in communication with taxpayers. Staff is held accountable for providing the highest level of customer service to all those that they come into contact with.

• **Other Duties as Assigned 5%**

1. Performs other duties as assigned by director or deputy director

Job Requirements

To perform successfully as a communications officer, the incumbent must be self-motivated; possess a strong work ethic; maintain a positive attitude; and enjoy working with, and for, the public. It is essential that the incumbent has the ability to make sound decisions and be accountable for them. Strong communication skills and the ability to communicate effectively and respectfully with a wide range of audiences including public speaking; convey complex and sometimes contentious information to varied audiences; analyze complex issues; and identify others' underlying concerns and motives are required. Seasoned judgment in decision making is necessary since the work is performed with minimal guidance and within broad guidelines. The incumbent is expected to apply critical thinking skills; be a problem solver with the ability to identify and resolve tactical and strategic issues before they become problematic; resolve operational issues; elevate matters as necessary; recommend solutions; and effectively implement division changes and management directives. The position requires considerable skill in program planning and implementation; negotiation, facilitation, and mediation; leadership techniques; project management; resource planning; organizational design; staffing and resource allocation; program administration; and budgeting. It is essential that the incumbent has the ability to work cross-functionally with all levels of senior management and employees and work effectively under pressure. This position works with highly confidential financial and tax information and is required to maintain the highest level of confidentiality regarding all information acquired or used in performing this job.

This position requires knowledge of communication theory, business communications, public relations, and media relations; English composition and grammar; and editorial standards and procedures. The position requires knowledge of business law; governmental organizational structure; government accounting and budgeting; procurement and inventory management; applicable state and federal regulations; public relations and communication; management theory and techniques; performance management; operational and program planning; organizational theory; project management; and legislative and administrative rule processes. The work requires knowledge of the direction and policies of the department; issues regarding the state and their impacts on division operations; knowledge of the methods, rules, laws, and functions of division programs; and applicable state and federal revenue laws and regulations. Knowledge of computers and database management including state and information systems (GenTax, TAP, ORION, SABHRS); data collection, analysis, and reporting techniques; compliance requirements and practices; customer service standards; supervisory principles and practices; department and state personnel policies, procedures, and precedents; and employment law are also required.

- The minimum level of education and job-related work experience needed as a new employee **on the first day** of work is a bachelor's degree in public relations, communications, business or public administration, education, or related field and three years of job-related work experience including one year of supervisory experience.
 - Work experience should include public relations or communications.
 - Seven years of progressively responsible public relations and/or communications and program planning or equivalent will substitute for the above education and experience.
 - Other combinations of education and experience will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Department Core Values

- **Respect:** As a representative of the people of Montana, proceeds with the highest level of respect for the dignity of every person contacted through work. Without exception, all people are treated as equally as possible. The employee is a faithful steward of the resources provided to this agency by the citizens of Montana.
- **Integrity:** Conducts work honestly and makes decisions that establish a clear record that the department serves the public with integrity. Apologizes for mistakes and gives credit to others for their cooperation, work, and ideas in achieving positive results. Accountable for their actions and holds others accountable for theirs. Decisions and judgments achieve equity and justice for all parties involved including citizens and co-workers.

- **Productivity:** Consistently strives to minimize the waste of the department's financial, facilities, and human resources. Diligently works to improve the productivity and effectiveness of the work unit. Welcomes and encourages new ideas on improving the results of the department from the public, other officials, colleagues, and supervisors. Approaches work in a manner that builds goodwill, trust, and cooperation internally with other staff and externally with the public.
- **Teamwork:** Maximizes cooperation and teamwork when working with other employees, divisions, and other state agencies. Willing to work with others for the opportunity to learn from their ideas, talents, and knowledge. Seeks to resolve conflicts with other employees and work units in an open and respectful manner that reinforces teamwork. Celebrates the successes of others.

Working Conditions

This position has considerable mental stress and pressure due to supervisory issues; workload; conflicting, multiple priorities; critical projects with hard deadlines; time constraints; significance of decisions made; the challenging nature of contacts with taxpayers, elected officials, etc.; and coordination of all functions of the public relations unit. At times, the incumbent will deal with angry, hostile, and difficult individuals to resolve concerns or to bring about compliance with regulations. This may cause stressful work conditions and a high degree of mental stress. As a Department of Revenue employee, the incumbent may come into contact with highly confidential financial and tax information and is required to maintain the highest level of confidentiality regarding all information acquired or used in performing this job. Work hours may exceed 40 hours per week from time to time. Leading up to and during legislative sessions work hours routinely exceed 40 hours per week and may include working evenings and weekends. This position requires considerable computer and keyboard use. The incumbent may spend considerable time on the phone. Lifting is infrequent, less than 15 pounds and includes carrying light items such as papers and books. This job requires regular attendance as scheduled by the supervisor. This job cannot be performed at an alternate work site.

Special requirements

- **Background Examination:** Applicants for this position will be subject to a criminal background review before being considered for employment. Individual circumstances involving a criminal conviction will be reviewed to determine an applicant's eligibility for employment.
- **Compliance with All Appropriate Montana Tax Laws:** An employee's tax status must be current.

This job profile was produced by the Office of Human Resources in conjunction with the appropriate managers.

Division Administrator Review: The statements in this job profile are accurate and complete.

Signature: Alan Peura, Deputy Director Date: August 2010

Human Resource Director Review: The Office of Human Resources has reviewed this job profile.

Signature: JeanAnn Scheuer, Human Resources Director Date: August 2010

Employee: My signature below indicates I have read this job profile and discussed it with my supervisor.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____